



## Energy Efficiency Kits Lending Program Final Project Report

### Purpose:

To make it possible for Idahoans to monitor energy usage and determine potential energy efficiencies in their homes by making available an energy measuring device through local public libraries.

### Desired Results:

- Idahoans will have increased awareness of energy use in their homes.
- Idahoans will have increased awareness of methods of saving energy.
- Idahoans recognize the library as a source for consumer information.

### Project Summary:

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) partnered with Idaho Power Company, Avista Utilities, and Rocky Mountain Power Company to create and distribute energy efficiency kits for use in public libraries. All parties contributed to the successful implementation of the program.

### Usage:

Total Annual Circulation: 1,139

Percentage of total Circulation to date by partner region:

Partner Region	Circulation Reported <sup>1</sup>	Percentage of Total Circulation	Percentage of Libraries by Service Area
Avista Utilities	152	13%	23%
Idaho Power Company	909	80%	60%
Rocky Mountain Power	49	4%	17%
Other	29	3%	

### User Satisfaction:

Library staff members were asked by survey to estimate the satisfaction of their customers. An overwhelming majority of responses were positive with 19% indicating “Very Satisfied” and 74% indicating “Satisfied.” Only 3 survey respondents indicated their customers were either “Dissatisfied” or “Very Dissatisfied” with the service.

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<sup>1</sup> Usage reports were not received by 100% of the participating libraries. As a result, actual circulation could be higher than reported.

## **Positive Comments**

- It served the purpose for which it was designed.
- They find it interesting.
- They found it interesting to see the difference in the power usage of their different appliances.
- "Patrons have been excited to have them available from LCLD, the only place that they are available." "Easy to use and easy for us to check out." "Some patrons have checked them out more than once." "Three patrons--each reported that they thought it was useful." "All stated that it was easy to use." Only one said he had trouble "figuring it out", but confessed he did not read the directions.
- It helped determine which electronics are high energy consumers.
- "Good to know"
- They were surprised that we had any type of energy efficiency kits to have people check out.
- Very positive feedback. Limited, but positive
- One customer in particular told me that she had saved \$36.00 per month on her power bill because of what she had learned by using the meter. She was pretty excited.
- Those patrons who have used the kits have been appreciative that they were available to them.
- They liked checking the appliances with their children to see what energy was used.
- "Interesting" to know how we use power
- We had several patrons remark how cool the kits are.
- Interesting results
- Seemed happy it was available to them. Used them to decide if they would buy a new appliance.
- Very useful in learning energy usage on different appliances.
- Just that it is interesting
- Interesting, informative, cool idea
- We really haven't heard any feedback but they are checked out most of the time.
- Very interested in finding out how many watts they're using.

## **Negative or Neutral Comments**

- Not much. They have not received much use.
- No one wanted one at all. I finally took them home as they were cluttering up the library. I would like to return them to whomever.
- None - Not much interest.
- One of our kits was taken from the library. The other kit has not been used
- We did not have much interest in the kits.
- We have only had a couple of people check them out.
- The 2 kits were checked out 4 times total.

It is expected that the needs of local users vary from community to community. Demonstrating that diversity were comments ranging from "excited to have them available" to "no one wanted one at all." There were some noticeable differences by geographic region and utility service area with 80% of all circulation taking place in the Idaho Power service area. The three libraries with the highest circulation of the energy kits are located in Ada County. These figures may be attributed to both the higher service populations and to considerable promotion carried out by Idaho Power Company direct to their customers.

## Top Circulation in Idaho Library Systems

Ada Community Library	130
Boise Public Library	102
Meridian District Library	84
Cooperative Information Network (North Idaho)	76
Twin Falls Public Library	74
Latah County Library District	56
Boise Basin Library District (Idaho City)	52
Eagle Public Library	50
The Community Library – Ketchum	49
Nampa Public Library	43

## Project Budget Explanation

### Funds Received

Idaho Power	\$4,821.00
Avista Utilities	1,848.00
Rocky Mountain Power	<u>1,366.00</u>
	<u>\$8,035.00</u>

### Expenses:

Kill-A-Watt Meters	\$4,350.39
Brochure printing	468.45
Logo Design	227.00
Tote Bags	1,495.00
Meter Distribution Mailing Boxes	165.00
Meter Distribution Postage	314.18
Poster Design	- 0 -
Poster Printing	40.95
Table Top Easels	461.45
Table Top Poster mailing Supplies	80.88
Table Top Poster Distribution Postage	<u>377.88</u>

Total Expenditures	<u>\$8,081.08</u>
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Remaining Funds	<u>\$ (46.08)<sup>2</sup></u>
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## Lessons Learned

The Energy Efficiency kit project was a unique opportunity for the Idaho Commission for Libraries to partner with the electrical utility companies serving the residents of Idaho. Library staff were asked if they would recommend the Commission pursue similar partnerships with these or other organizations if

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<sup>2</sup> Excess costs were paid from the Networking budget (T10108-00) with Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds.

the opportunity were presented in the future. Of the survey respondents, 76% indicated the Commission should pursue similar programs in the future. Where respondents did not agree with pursuing similar programs or were unsure, the following comments were provided:

- There hasn't been much interest in these kits.
- What kind of information do they want from this partnership? How much more work will it put on librarians to participate?
- This seemed to not be very useful to people.
- If the partnership was useful. I would like to see us partner with Zamzow's or D & B for gardening information. Or perhaps with the extension service agents in each county. People really need home garden, home chickens, home canning information!!
- If it's something that would be helpful to a larger number of people, then yes.
- Without knowing how the partnership impacts the ICfL and what the future ones would look like I don't feel informed enough to make a yes or no answer.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, Idaho library staff were asked to offer their feedback on the Energy Efficiency Kit Lending Program or future programs that could arise. Only 15 respondents provided a response to the request, but responses are useful for informing future projects.

- I'm the one and only staff member. I thought the EEK was a great idea and would like to see future projects occur.
- Good partnership. Energy use is a common individual and community concern.
- We would like to see more of these projects. With the right marketing, it will be a useful tool for our community.
- Interesting project. Good idea.
- We love the ICfL, but this project fell a little flat.
- Any opportunity for the library to serve the public is welcome. We are about more than books.
- Ask me first if I want to participate. I didn't think this would go over with my community and I certainly did nothing to promote it. I had it available at the adult table.
- This is something I would not have thought of but it is a nice service to give to the community.
- I wish there had been more publicity. We only had a couple people ask about it.
- It was great that ICfL had a site that patrons could go to for more information. It certainly made it easier for our library staff. We definitely would be interested in any future projects.
- We would keep them in a different place the next time.
- It would depend on what type of kit or project. We don't have a lot of enthusiasm for this type of thing here.
- The Bruneau Library doesn't have many people checking out the Energy Efficiency Kit, but even one is worth the time.
- Nice to have projects like this
- I think it is a great idea and would like to participate in similar programs.

Due to restrictions for collecting personal information about Energy Kit users from public libraries, it was not possible to gather specific information on how consumers used the meters, how they adjusted their home energy use, or the amount of energy savings experienced by residential customers of the partner power utilities. It is known, however, that energy kits were circulated to Idahoans 1,139 times during the first year of the project. Considering the retail cost of a Kill A Watt™ meter at \$16.44<sup>3</sup>, the retail value of

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<sup>3</sup> [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/Kill-A-Watt/dp/B000048G03)

the equipment used for 1,139 households would amount to approximately \$18,725. This demonstrates a good value for the \$8,081.08 invested in the Energy Efficiency Kit Lending Program by the partners. Staff time at the power companies and the Commission for Libraries is not accounted for in the funds invested.

The success of the program is not limited to the good value and positive feedback. There are constructive lessons to be learned from the feedback provided by the library community – both activities to continue and opportunities to improve for the future.

<b>What worked well?</b>	<b>What would work better next time?</b>
Good value for the funds expended.	Provide more direction for promotional ideas to libraries early in the project.
Simplifying the instructions for using the meter midway into program in response to feedback.	Higher response rate for circulation reporting and surveys.
Promotion at Idaho Green Expo and direct customer communication by Idaho Power Company	Coordinated statewide promotion.
Experience working with new partners outside traditional library field.	Longer implementation period to provide more information to libraries.

## **Next Steps**

The lending program will carry on as long as kits remain in circulation in Idaho's public libraries. Libraries wishing to cease circulation will have the opportunity to return them to the Idaho Commission for Libraries. Commission staff will continue to replace kits for libraries that need them for as long as current supplies are available.

In summary, the Energy Efficiency Kits Lending Program was a successful endeavor. The Idaho Commission for Libraries had the notable opportunity to work with new community partners. Additionally, the project is an example of a non-traditional way in which the Commission achieves its mission to "build the capacity of libraries to better serve their clientele." The Energy Efficiency Kits Lending Program allowed libraries to provide a tool for Idahoans to identify potential savings during a bleak economic period.

It is recommended that similar programs be pursued if opportunities are presented that both fall within the agency's mission and can be carried out with the resources available at ICfL and within the library community.